

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2002

Present: Nina Wang (Acting Traffic Engineer) Candace Havens (Mayoral Appointee)
Captain Alex Sbordone (Police) Evelyn Addante (Planning) Rosalie Myers (Clerk)

Other Aldermen Present: Ald. Bryson, Ald. Merrill, Ald. Lennon, Ald. Linsky

Absent: Ald. Samuelson

#265-02 ALD. BRYSON transmitting on behalf of Auburn Street residents a request for NO PARKING ANYTIME on the north side of Auburn Street from Commonwealth Avenue easterly at distance to be determined. (Ward 4)

ACTION: HELD 4-0

NOTE: Ald. Bryson explained that there was a request for no parking on Auburn Street, but it now appears that there has been a change of opinion regarding the parking in this area.

Andrew Adelson of 570 Auburn Street addressed the Committee and said he was one of the people to sign the petition to ask for this and now was at the meeting to ask to rescind that request. Donald Hoffman of 572 Auburn Street also asked that the parking not change in this area. Daniel Corbett of 14 Evergreen Avenue disagreed and went on to say that, twice during the last six months, he almost was hit coming west up the hill and even though he was driving at a moderate speed, it was almost impossible to see Evergreen Avenue with the cars parked on the right hand side.

Nina Wang found there is an existing bylaw on the books with a restriction of No Parking anytime on the south side of Auburn Street. . Unfortunately, most of the signs have been missing for years between Commonwealth Avenue to Woodland. Nina Wang said she has no choice but to install the missing signs as stated in the city ordinances. Ald. Bryson suggested that the item be held.

Captain Sbordone made a motion that based on the information heard regarding the restrictions on the south side that the docket item be held.

#252-02 RICHARD & SHIRLEY MORRISON 487 Lowell Avenue, Newtonville requesting No Parking 7am - 9 am (school days) on LOWELL AVENUE from Craigie Terrace to Arden Road. (Ward 2)

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: The following residents were present for discussion of this item:
Richard and Shirley Morrison, 487 Lowell Avenue, Eugene Cohen, 487 Lowell Avenue, and Karen Lumino, 11 Arden Road.

Nina Wang said she has had the opportunity to consult with the School Department regarding the possibility of moving the bus stop. (This was discussed at the Council meeting held on September 26, 2002.) After investigation, it was found that moving the bus stop would not allow the existing space to be used for parking as there is a curb cut in that location and would not be a viable solution. The Traffic Engineer stated that 30 ft. could be opened up at the north side of the driveway of 487 Lowell Avenue. Ald. Linsky felt some relief is really needed in this area.

A motion was made by Evelyn Addante, Transportation Planner, that on school days, Monday through Friday, No Parking on Lowell Avenue, west side of street from 7am to 9 am from a location to be determined by the Traffic Engineer.

#175-01 ALD. LIPSITT, BAKER, GERST, MERRILL & O'HALLORAN requesting reduction in speed limit on WAVERLEY AVENUE between KENRICK/SARGENT STREET & TREMONT STREET. (Ward 7, Ward 1) (05-24-01)

ACTION: HELD for 90 days.

NOTE: The following residents were present for this discussion: Stephen Fabry, 156 Waverley Ave., Tedd Boudreau, 140 Waverley Ave., Jennifer Haas, 115 Franklin Street.

Todd Boudreau said a study had been done which showed the average speed to be approximately 46 mph and it was determined there had been five or six accidents right around Burr Park in a six month period. He stressed that this is a very unsafe situation.

Ald. Scott Lennon stated he had been contacted by a number of residents in this area. He went on to say that Captain Sbordone had been able to schedule selective enforcement. Eighty-five percent of the motorists travelling on Waverley Avenue are driving at 44 mph. The neighborhood

felt it was unacceptable to wait for a year to have some action put into place and some positive attention must be brought to this area. Ald. Merrill said the focus on speed in this area is all-important. Betsey Millstein said very few cars observe the speed limit and feels more police presence would be helpful.

Ellen Hume of 121 Hunnewell Avenue said there would be a Public Hearing of the Mass. Turnpike Task Force on November 21 at 7:00 pm in the War Memorial Auditorium and urged all to attend.

Captain Sbordone confirmed the Police Department has been doing a tremendous amount of selective enforcement in that area. Since January 1901, 172 moving violations have been issued just on Waverley Avenue and most recently as a result of Ald. Lennon's request, a vehicle has been assigned four or five times a week to Vernon Street.

Ald. Baker was unable to attend but wanted to be on record as saying he fully supports this petition.

Ms. Havens expressed her concern regarding the problems in this area and hoped that positive action could be taken very soon. She questioned what the criteria would be for installing flashing yellow school signs that say 20 mph and if there was an area that could be a possibility for that option.

Nina Wang said school zones are very clearly defined. Traffic calming is a nation-wide issue being studied all over the country and Ms. Wang said she would do whatever she could to improve conditions in this area. Speed limit north of Church Street is 25 mph, south of Church Street, the limit is 30 mph in both directions. Currently all speed limit signs are in place. Ms. Wang suggested that placing the variable speed trailer in that area would also be helpful. City of Newton Ordinances do not allow speed bumps. Narrowing the street would be moderately effective and would not be an immediate consideration for speed reduction. A four-way stop and a traffic light could be evaluated. The Traffic Engineer said to narrow down the travel lane, edge lines will be used. Ald. Lennon requested that whatever could be done be put in place immediately. Ms. Wang suggested treating the surface of the crosswalk differently. The new material is made of concrete and would work well on the crosswalk increasing its visibility as well as the rough surface causing cars to slow down. This enhancement, of course, would require new construction.

Captain Sbordone said unfortunately there is only one speed monitor and it is always in great demand. The section of Waverley Avenue discussed tonight will definitely have more enforcement.

Evelyn Addante, Transportation Planner, explained there is a downside to traffic calming or physical barriers as that makes trying to move traffic through the City more difficult.

Candace Havens did have concerns regarding the use of posts in the street. She felt this would encourage children to cross the street when cars have not slowed down.

Ms. Wang explained that for a four-way stop, federal standards have to be met for certain warrants. The Traffic Engineer will check for a crosswalk at Arlington and Waverley and if found to be safe, that could be implemented.

A motion was made by Evelyn Addante that the first location to be studied and hopefully implemented will initially be Arlington and Waverley for four way stop study. After 90 days, recommendations will be brought forward for the four-way stop.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie Myers, Committee Clerk